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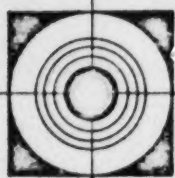
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ABSTRACT

The use of volunteers is one answer to the short supply of human and financial resources in our nation's secondary schools. There is evidence that volunteer programs planned with broad based faculty-student involvement greatly enrich classroom activities. The principal holds a key role in assuring the success of volunteer programs by coordinating and supporting their use. Volunteer programs achieve a greater chance of success when they arise out of staff perceptions of legitimate need for such programs. Orientation sessions in which the school staff is involved in the planning and development of a volunteer program are critical in fostering positive attitudes by staff members toward volunteers. Volunteers can participate in a wide variety of activities including clerical duties, library assistance, phone calling, and assistance with extracurricular activities. Retired persons provide a rich pool of human resources. A description of several school volunteer programs is provided, including outlines of the many ways in which volunteers are employed and the names and addresses of school personnel to contact for further information. (JEH)

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VOLUNTEERS IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

A Valuable Resource

You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.

-- Kahlil Gibran

Human resources have always been in short supply in our nation's schools. Increasing demands for accountability, rising costs, and diminishing budgets make staffing the schools more difficult today than ever before.

The problem is not without a potential solution, however. A reservoir of skill and talent exists among parents, older citizens, and retired persons in the school community. For example, more than 32 million people in the United States are 60 years of age or older, and a great wealth of experience and talent is concentrated in this segment of society.

The number of available volunteers is endless, and one need only look within the boundaries of the community for willing helpers. It is well documented that parents have always been eager to assist teachers and administrators in the day-to-day operation of the schools. The 1976 Gallup poll revealed that eight of every ten persons polled voiced approval for parent education courses which would help parents assist in their children's education. Most educators agree that students profit from the influence of parent's and senior citizen's volunteer services.

During the past two decades, American volunteerism has matured. There is evidence that where volunteer programs have been planned with broad-based faculty-student involvement, classroom and student activities have been greatly enriched. It is reasonable to assume that schools in the '80s should plan and staff with volunteerism clearly in mind.

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The Principal's Role in Planning

The success of a school volunteer program will depend upon the amount of leadership the principal is willing to provide. The Baltimore County (Md.) Public Schools' Volunteer Handbook outlines this responsibility:

The principal assumes the key role in assuring the success of all programs in the school. Working together with the school staff and the central staff coordinator for volunteer programs, the principal shall be responsible for the operation of a volunteer program.

Ways the principal may participate in the volunteer program include:

1. Foster a positive attitude among staff toward a volunteer program.
2. Assess the need for teacher interest in a volunteer program for the local school.
3. Set goals for the volunteer program appropriate to the school's commitment to education.
4. Identify with staff specific needs in which volunteers can be of help.
5. Select a compatible, interested, and qualified volunteer coordinator.
6. Define the coordinator's tasks and role.
7. Help in the provision of workspace, materials, and supplies.
8. Establish the procedures for selection of volunteers.
9. Provide for orientation of volunteers and participating teachers.
10. Inform the volunteers of school board policies, procedures, and regulations.
11. Provide for a liaison between the local PTA or PTSA and the volunteer program in the school.
12. Evaluate the local school volunteer program.

An administrator or teacher must be designated to coordinate the volunteers. Much of the program will depend upon the leadership, enthusiasm, and administrative ability of the coordinator. If a large number of volunteers are involved, consideration should be given to providing a part- or full-time director. School districts that have professional staff in charge of volunteer programs report favorable results. When large numbers of volunteers are involved, the cost of a professional coordinator is small in comparison to the value gained for the school.



Help in Planning

A number of resources are available to help the principal through the National School Volunteer Program (NSVP). The NSVP has a variety of materials helpful to secondary schools in beginning a local volunteer program.

Volunteers in Education: Future Public Policy (2nd edition, revised)

This policy manual includes statements of support for school volunteers and covers issues such as business involvement in school volunteer programs, volunteers in career planning in the community, older Americans as school volunteers, and the economic implications of volunteers in education.

Business and Education: Partners for the '80s

This publication describes 20 school volunteer career planning projects for older students presently operating in urban school districts across the country. Each profile includes the school district's characteristics, student population served, start-up budget requirements, and an outline of the basic program structure and implementation.

Volunteer Programs and Older Students

This brochure addresses the special circumstances which must be considered when setting up school volunteer programs at the middle and secondary school levels. It includes program profiles of successful tutoring, ESL, library, parent participation, community resource programs, and a bibliography.

Evaluation

A booklet of tips, forms, checklists, and case study information for school volunteer coordinators and administrators.

Partners for the '80s: Teachers and Volunteers Working Together

This audiovisual program presents an overview of school volunteer programs and features many of the innovative ways volunteer services are utilized in the school setting. It can be most useful in conjunction with inservice of teachers to work with school volunteers.

Information about these materials is available from NSVP, 300 North Washington St., Alexandria, Va. 22314. Telephone: (703) 836-4880.

Another organization that provides leadership for volunteers is the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), active in schools and community agencies in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands. RSVP is a federally-funded program providing professional leadership for some 250,000 volunteers. Regional offices are located in 10 states. For information about the RSVP program, call toll free (800) 424-8580.



Organizing and Recruiting Volunteers

There is no substitute for proper planning and organizing for school volunteers. Teacher participation is imperative if volunteers are to be well received and their services are to be properly utilized. The Fairfax County (Va.) Public Schools' Volunteer handbook urges:

Volunteer programs should arise out of a clearly felt need for assistance in some area of the school program. A principal and a school staff must genuinely desire a program, and the school community must be willing to serve and to accept orientation and training. Although the impetus for a program may come from a single dynamic person, or a small group of enthusiasts, an administrative structure is necessary for effective operation. And, however high the enthusiasm, experience in volunteer programs clearly indicates the wisdom in beginning with a limited, carefully run project, and expanding slowly.

Everyone working in or with a volunteer program will be more comfortable if there are ground rules. All participants need to know what is expected of them and what they, in turn, can expect of others. Even in an informal volunteer organization there should be a clearly understood chain of command with assigned roles for the staff and volunteer workers. Policies need to be established and embodied in rules and guidelines.

The handbook recommends the following beginning steps:

- ✓ Staff and principal meet to identify needs.
- ✓ Principal selects a volunteer coordinator and/or a staff liaison person; consultation with the school PTA president is desirable.
- ✓ Inservice is held for staff in volunteer utilization and supervision.
- ✓ Staff, principal, and the volunteer coordinator establish organizational framework, define tasks and roles in which volunteers will be utilized, and determine rules and procedures.
- ✓ Write volunteer handbook.
- ✓ Volunteers are recruited, screened, and oriented.
- ✓ Volunteers are trained by staff or in area or county course.
- ✓ Volunteers are assigned and begin service with those staff members requesting that service.

After the volunteer program has been organized and the needs of the school have been determined, recruitment procedures should be planned. Locating and securing volunteers with appropriate skills may be accomplished in a variety of ways. If the school has a PTA or an organized parents' group, it is useful to make an appeal for volunteers through their newsletters.

Other ways of advertising the volunteer program are:

- Announcements in the school publications and local press
- A "town meeting" to announce or launch the volunteer project
- Announcements in the bulletins of local churches and synagogues
- Notification to local civic organizations
- Radio and television public service announcements
- Sign-up tables at all school programs attended by parents
- Announcements on bulletin boards in the community
- Flyers and brochures placed in appropriate offices throughout the community.

After all avenues of recruitment are exhausted and the volunteers have been identified, placement should proceed according to well-defined guidelines. Each school's staff members should develop guidelines appropriate to local needs, making it clear that the volunteer is not a substitute teacher. The volunteer's role is a supportive one, supplementing and enriching the work of the teacher.

Guidelines must not be left to chance. They should be explicit and should include:

- ✓ Principal's role
- ✓ A statement of ethics for the school volunteer
- ✓ Preparation and orientation
- ✓ Supervision of the volunteers' work
- ✓ Teacher responsibilities to the volunteer
- ✓ School coordinator's role
- ✓ Volunteer orientation and inservice training.



Staff and Volunteer Orientation

If faculty members have been involved in planning the volunteer program the need for staff orientation will be minimal. All staff members should know what the program is and is not. If a teacher feels threatened in any way, that teacher should not be forced to participate in the program. Positive attitudes are essential for success.

The orientation for the staff should include a discussion of the following topics:

- Characteristics of the volunteer program
- Administrative procedures for the program
- Description of responsibilities that the volunteer should and should not assume
- Supervision of the volunteer
- Communication among program coordinator, teachers, and volunteers
- Methods of dealing with problems.

School volunteers need not be familiar with the entire operation of the school but it is important that the orientation include everything that will ensure successful experiences. Topics for consideration should include:

- Philosophy of volunteerism—a written statement of goals and objectives should be available to participants in the program.
- Program organization—charts or other graphic details explaining the structure of the volunteer program are important to both staff and volunteers.
- Code of ethics—this is usually adapted from the teacher code of ethics. Strict adherence to the code of ethics is essential for the success of the program.
- State laws and local policies—school board policy and laws pertaining to volunteers should be provided in written form.
- General school policies—all school policies that relate to volunteers should be discussed in the orientation.



Recognition of the Volunteer

The greatest reward a school volunteer can experience is the feeling of contributing something of worth to the students and the school. But even the most altruistic person likes to know that the school is pleased with his or her services. A simple and sincere "thank you" goes a long way in boosting morale, but there are many other ways of showing appreciation to the volunteer. Consider what some schools are currently doing:

- Letters of appreciation
- Certificates of recognition
- Special programs, coffees, teas
- Newsletter and school paper publicity
- End-of-year awards
- Invitation to faculty events
- Complimentary tickets to certain school activities
- Recognition at PTA meetings or other school events.

Schools are more likely to retain a volunteer whose services are properly utilized and appreciated. Staff and students need to be aware of the importance of showing gratitude for the services that volunteers provide.



To Illustrate

The following schools reflect a variety of activities in which volunteers are participating.



J.E.B. Stuart High School
Richard W. Johnson, Principal

3301 Peace Valley Lane
Falls Church, Va. 22044

During 1979-80, 402 volunteers contributed 19,415 hours of service to the school. The program is coordinated by a faculty member and a volunteer parent. Examples of services provided are:

- Volunteers make daily calls to homes of absent students.
- Volunteers assist teachers and office staff by typing, filing, collating, and other clerical duties.
- Volunteer services are used extensively in the library for such tasks as cataloging, classifying, and shelving books. Volunteers also assist students in locating materials.
- The career/college room, which is open daily, is staffed by volunteers. Volunteers assist students in finding information about colleges, scholarships, and careers.
- The Job Placement Office is staffed by volunteers. Many phone calls are made to employers to locate part-time jobs for students. Volunteers advertise the job openings on a bulletin board in the school and set up interviews for students.

- Volunteers assist the school nurse in the clinic and are used extensively in health screening of students.
- A student-parent-teacher newsletter is published monthly by volunteers. This publication has received awards for excellence.
- Volunteers help the athletic and music departments in booster clubs, operation of concession booths, newsletters, chaperoning, etc.



Metairie Park Day School
Charles Saltzman, Headmaster

300 Park Rd.
Metairie, La. 70005

This private K-12 day school makes use of parent volunteer assistance in a variety of activities in the school. The volunteer assistance is extensive and diversified. The enthusiasm of the faculty members and the headmaster has generated widespread participation in the volunteer program. Volunteers actively participate in all fund-raising activities. Volunteers assist teachers in the classroom and social activities in the school. Recently a large number of parent volunteers participated in rebuilding the school stadium.



R B Williams Junior High School
Robert D. Daane, Principal

1425 Cedar St.
Sturgis, S. Dak. 57785

Senior citizen volunteers play a significant role in assisting the faculty and administration in this junior high school.

- Volunteers serve as aides to the industrial arts and home economics teachers.
- The school library (also a joint public library) is assisted by volunteers from the community. Volunteers help in taping textbook material for students with visual problems.
- Senior citizens serve as tutors. Students are sent to the homes if volunteers are unable to come to the school.
- Volunteers help in such areas as custodial services, traffic control, and crosswalk supervision.



Sewanhaka Central H.S. District
Shirley Winters, Reading Coordinator

555 Ridge Rd.
Elmont, N.Y. 11003

Parents and senior citizen volunteers are an integral part of the seventh grade developmental reading program in this large suburban school district, located in Long Island, N.Y. Students receive individualized assistance. Volunteers help teachers by marking papers, organizing instructional materials, maintaining audiovisual equipment, and staffing reading laboratories.

The job of recruiting volunteers has been assumed by a volunteer, relieving teachers and administrators of the responsibility. Parents and senior citizens have reacted favorably to working with students and teachers. Teachers who were initially somewhat reluctant to assign jobs to volunteers have come to fully appreciate the worth of the program. Many of the volunteers return year after year.



Retired Senior Volunteer Program
Mona Lee Sellers, Director

P. O. Box 172
Sapulpa, Okla. 74066

The secondary schools in Sapulpa, Okla., utilize the services and skills of retired professional and nonprofessional citizens.

Retired persons with a variety of skills have instructed classes in the Sapulpa schools. Examples of their contributions are:

- A former high school teacher and retired optometrist met with classes to discuss the profession of optometry.
- A retired newspaper editor was a visiting lecturer in journalism and English classes.
- Home economics students were instructed in the art of crocheting by a retired librarian.
- A retired businessman who was active in local political affairs met with social studies classes to discuss the electoral college system.
- Retired educators have assisted remedial reading teachers.
- Volunteers have worked in the libraries cataloging, checking out books, shelving, etc.
- Volunteers have judged art exhibits, poetry readings, essay contests, etc.
- A retired nurseryman has discussed plant life with biology classes.
- Information about honey bees and honey making was shared with students by a retired person with experience in this area.



Oklahoma City Public Schools
Marilyn Oden, School Volunteer
Coordinator

900 North Klein
Oklahoma City, Okla. 73106

The Oklahoma City Public Schools are having success at all grade levels with a well-organized school volunteer program. Characteristics of the program include:

- The volunteers are from all age groups and a full range of ethnic, economic, and educational backgrounds. They are people with a desire to help children and a willingness to give of their time and talents.
- Throughout the year, there are training workshops for teacher-volunteer teams. These sessions are organized around specific programs in which teachers and volunteers work together and are aimed at developing the skills needed for those programs and establishing and defining the roles of teachers and volunteers.
- Volunteers are assigned after a meeting with the coordinator where information is provided about the policies and philosophy of the program and the school system. The volunteers' preferences and interests are discussed, and when principals' requests are received the volunteer is appropriately assigned. The volunteer always has the option of accepting or not accepting a particular assignment.

- Volunteers work under the direction of a certified staff member, usually a teacher. Once a year evaluation forms are sent to all teachers and principals who work with volunteers. They are asked to rate volunteers on such aspects of performance as dependability, attitude, and ability to relate to students. Volunteers are also asked to evaluate the service they have given to the schools and the role they have been expected to assume. These evaluations enable the staff to make meaningful changes in the orientation for both teachers and volunteers.

The volunteer program has provided an avenue through which concerned citizens of the community can know their schools and can be involved in what's happening in them. Volunteers tie together the school and the community. The program continues to grow in acceptance by students and by increasing numbers of teachers and principals.



Loyalist Collegiate and Vocational
Institute
J.G. Linscott, Principal

153 Van Order Dr.
Kingston, Ontario, Canada

In January 1978, Loyalist Collegiate and Vocational Institute, with the support of the Senior Citizens' Council and funding from the Community School Development Grant from the Ministry of Education, initiated a Senior Citizens' Project, "Bridging the Gap." During the past three decades, many high school age students have been deprived of association with older people. The recognized benefits of grandparents or great aunts and uncles in the family structure are being lost due to the shifting patterns of families and the tendency toward isolation of the elderly.

The purposes of this project are to establish valuable interaction between high school students and senior citizens in the community; to enable students to learn from the background, experiences, and particular skills of the older generation; and to provide for the needs of senior citizens through school courses, facilities, and other resources.

The program has a number of interesting features:

- Senior citizens have access to all school resources (i.e., hairdressing salon, library, arts and crafts studios, woodworking, metal fabricating, auto shop, cafeteria).
- They participate and assist in the organization of school activities (i.e., luncheons and fund-raising events).
- They may continue their schooling or take part in courses as part-time students in day school.
- They assist in the classroom as guest speakers, tutors, and teacher aides in history, Spanish, and remedial reading.
- A resource center on senior citizens is located in the school library.
- The home economics classes have refinished a lounge for senior citizens in the school.
- Students are involved with senior citizens in regular social activities (i.e., card playing).



Mesa Unified School District #4
George N. Smith, Superintendent

549 North Stapley Dr.
Mesa, Ariz. 85203

A retired school superintendent and his wife, a retired librarian, serve as outstanding examples of how senior citizens' skills and experience can be utilized at Mountain View High School, Mesa, Ariz. The couple have been working part-time in the school library for the past three years. Other retired librarians have joined the couple to assist. Their contributions include:

- Cataloging, filing, and shelving books
- Organizing the map collection
- Lettering materials
- Checking books in/out.

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